



Litter Picks

Electronic Newsletter

April 2006

Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, Division of Environmental Enhancement

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DEQ's Community Involvement Initiative: The Department of Environmental Quality is dedicated to helping the public better understand DEQ's role in protecting the environment, and to involving the public more effectively in environmental decision making.

Welcome to Litter Picks, a look at litter prevention news in the Commonwealth and across the nation. We hope that some of this information is helpful to you in your programs, and hope you'll help us with news from your area related to litter prevention and awareness. Had a successful clean up event? Recognized companies or citizens for their clean up efforts? Let us know by sending this information to Sheila Barnett at

smbarnett@deq.virginia.gov.

Trash Free Potomac by 2013

The Alice Ferguson Foundation sponsored the Potomac Watershed Trash Summit on March 16 at the World Bank in Washington, DC. The summit calls for a trash free Potomac River by 2013. In order to achieve this, the Alice Ferguson Foundation hopes to run an anti-littering campaign that is similar to the anti-smoking campaign. They want to change our culture so that littering becomes unacceptable and teach people that littering is bad for us and for the environment.

During the morning session, elected officials signed the Trash Free Potomac 2006 Action Agreement and made personal comments about their commitment to working on eliminating trash in their jurisdictions. The Treaty has been signed by Secretary Audrey Scott on behalf of Maryland Governor Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr., and by Director Elizabeth Berry of behalf of Mayor Anthony Williams but no one has signed on behalf of the Commonwealth of Virginia. Virginia localities that are signatories to the document include Alexandria and Fairfax, Arlington and Prince William counties.

There were six concurrent panel sessions in the afternoon. The topics included:

- ✓ Trash Talk: Student Forum on Trash Awareness
- ✓ Wake Up and Smell the Trash! Public Information and Education
- ✓ Learning from the Los Angeles River Watershed Project: TMDL's and How Trash Leads to Water Quality and Public Support
- ✓ Enforcement of Trash Crimes
- ✓ Trash Hot Spots and Regional Successes
- ✓ There's Treasure in Trash: Recycling and Business Opportunities

The first step in moving towards a trash free Potomac will be mapping out the trash hot spots and cleaning them up first.

The officials who spoke at the summit and signed the plan believe in the success of the Trash Free Potomac by 2013 because citizens have taken the initiative to get the project started and governments can follow the citizen's lead

For more information contact the Alice Ferguson Foundation at: http://www.hardbargainfarm.org/trash_initiative/trash_summit.html

Did You Know?

- ✓ April 16 – 22 is National Environmental Education Week. <http://www.eeweeek.org/index.html>
- ✓ VDOT has set the date for the Statewide Spring Clean up for April 29. To organize a pick up or join with another group, contact your local Adopt-a-Highway Coordinator. Call 1-800 PRIDE VA (774-3382) or go to: <http://www.virginiadot.org/infoservice/prog-aah-coords.asp>
- ✓ The Gateway Streetscape Foundation of Henry County held a winter clean up of the Smith River on March 11. They had their biggest turnout ever of 60 people. They cleaned out 10.83 tons of litter in less than 6 hours! Contact Lois Christensen at (276) 634-4674 or gateway@co.henry.va.us
- ✓ The Virginia Tech Student Government Association sponsored their 5th annual "Big Event" on Saturday, April 1. Volunteers received their assigned projects from city officials and worked all over town raking leaves, painting houses, landscaping, picking up trash, etc. Organizations are invited to participate through the student involvement committee. This year they had 2,100 participants who did 256 jobs. Contact Lisa Crable 540-394-2120, Ext. 4085 or mcpfs@naxs.com
- ✓ Hampton Roads residents had an opportunity to find out where the trash went once it was picked up from the curb aboard the Tour de Trash Bus. They saw the Bethel Landfill, Yard Waste Processing Site, The Refuse-Fired Steam Plant, and recycling facilities. Call 757-727-6776 or go to: <http://www.hampton.va.us/hccc/ww.html>

Storm Drain Marking – Why It's Important

When it rains, whatever is on the streets, parking lots or in people's yards runs into the storm drains and goes directly into our waterways. When fertilizers, motor oil, gasoline, and other types of litter are gathered in this manner, it is referred to as nonpoint source pollution.

The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation has a statewide storm drain stenciling program. It takes at least two people and about 15 minutes to mark a drain. DCR will make the necessary arrangements for volunteers to mark storm drains.

This includes contacting the Virginia Department of Transportation that volunteers will be working in the roads right-of-way and letting the local government know about the project.

Storm drain marking serves as an effective method for letting the population know that the water, and whatever debris may be in it, goes directly into our waterways.

To get more information about DCR's storm drain stenciling program, go to: <http://www.state.va.us/dcr/forms/DCR199-027.pdf>

LITTER PICKS Continued

Volunteers Clean up Tire Pile in Chesapeake

The Hickory Ruritans along with volunteers from the Southeastern Public Service Authority, the City of Chesapeake, and the Department of Environmental Quality's Tidewater Regional Office have come together to remove a high priority abandoned waste tire pile in the Chesapeake area.

The pile consists of an estimated 1,800 tires. The tires are being removed by hand. So far, 7.55 tons of tires have been delivered to the SPSA landfill from the tire site. The tire removal is being coordinated by Milt, Johnston, a member of the Hickory Ruritan Club and an employee of the Waste Compliance Division in DEQ's Tidewater Regional Office. Contact: mljohnston@deq.virginia.state.gov or (757) 518-2151.

Earth Force Teaches Children to be Environmental Leaders

Earth Force is a national organization that trains school children to become leaders in their community by looking for sustainable solutions to local environmental issues in their community.

For example, students may decide to do a litter pick up, but picking up litter doesn't solve the problem of the accumulation of more litter, so the students or teachers may write grants with suggestions on how the problem can be solved such as adding more trash cans. The national office of Earth Force is located in Alexandria. For more information go to: <http://www.earthforce.org/section/aboutef/> or call Toll Free (800) 23-FORCE (233-6723)

Earth Day/Arbor Day Calendar of Events

April:

- 21 Earth Day hosted by Environmental Solutions 3 – 6 p.m. 10625 Patterson Avenue, Richmond. Displays by Environmental Solutions, Inc, Virginia, Naturally, CVWMA, and Keep Henrico Beautiful. Contact Tena Krouse at (804) 740-5605.
- 22 Greater Lynchburg Environmental Network's (GLEN) 2nd Annual Earth Day Gathering Bank of the James Building, 8th Floor. Hosting forums on Green Business and Sustainable Planning and Development and Community Partnerships. www.glenetwork.org
- 22 Earth Day Richmond Celebration, Fish Festival and 2nd Annual Mayor's Walk & Roll 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. South end of the Mayo Bridge. 804-649-3764 or www.earthdayrichmond.org

For additional information about Earth Day events and clean ups, visit the following websites:

Virginia Naturally:

www.vanaturally.com/volunteer.html

Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation

www.dcr.virginia.gov/stewardship/svents.htm

Central Virginia Waste Management Authority

www.cvwma.com

May:

- 5 – 7 Hampton Roads Great American Neighborhood Cleanup. Pick a spot to clean up and/or beautify or conduct a recycling campaign. List of ideas can be endless! Clean ups must be registered with the Hampton Clean City Commission by April 21. 757-727-6394 or www.hampton.va.us/hccc/ass.html
- 7 Earth Day 2006 at Mt. Trashmore Park 11 a.m. – 5 p.m. Virginia Beach. Contact the Virginia Beach Clean Community Commission at (757) 385-4104 or www.VBgov.com/vbclean
- 13 Cleaning of the Dan 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. Pre-registration required. Clean the river beds and waterway from Union Street Bridge to Anglers's Park. City of Danville Call (434) 791-5160

Southwest Virginia Litter Summit

The 2nd Annual Talking Trash Litter Summit was held April 17 - 18 at the Oxbow Center, in St. Paul, VA. The goals of the summit were to:

- ✓ Galvanize regional will to clean up identified dumpsites
- ✓ Foster regional cooperation among the counties in working together: trash cleanups/sharing equipment
- ✓ Opportunities for citizens to aid in the war on litter: cleaning up small illegal dumpsites and assisting with locating dumps and problem areas.
- ✓ Encourage the southwest region to clean up: "Company is a Comin" – Crooked Road Music Heritage Trail
- ✓ Recommend "Tougher" litter ordinance for the counties and "civil" prosecution vs. "criminal" route in court.

Topics included:

- ✓ Illegal Dump Inventory, Cleanup and Enforcement Tools and Mapping Efforts
- ✓ Litter Prevention Education
- ✓ Keep America Beautiful: Becoming an Affiliate
- ✓ Groundhog Camera "Off-site" Workshop
- ✓ Assign-a-Highway
- ✓ VDOT's Adopt-a-Highway
- ✓ Southwest VA's Litter Task Force Recommendations
- ✓ Economic Impacts of Litter
- ✓ Tougher Litter Ordinances
- ✓ Creating a Southwest Virginia Environmental Court
- ✓ Dickenson County's Success Stories of Illegal Dump surveying, cleanups, Assign-a-Highway and Model Litter Ordinances.
- ✓ Panel Discussion: Where does the Region Go From Here?
- ✓ Community Beautification Award Program.

For more information contact the Upper Tennessee River Roundtable, Inc. at 276-628-4100.

2005 Keep America Beautiful Awards: KAB Recognizes the Following Virginia Localities:

Beautification and Community Improvement:

- ✓ Hampton Roads Clean City Commission

Distinguished Service Citation:

- ✓ City of Fairfax Community Appearance Committee
- ✓ Pittsylvania County Beautification & Litter Control, Chatham
- ✓ Kentuck Elementary School Litter & Beautification Program, Ringgold

National Award for Waste Reduction:

- ✓ Keep Fort Monroe Beautiful, Fort Monroe

To see the list of awards and recognition programs by KAB, go to: <http://www.kab.org/aboutus2.asp?id=774>

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